

SECRETOLL/LD
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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1603
INFO RUEHJUB/USINT HAVANA 1738
BT
S E C R E T PANAMA 00707

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, US, CU
SUBJECT: PANAMA ADVOCATES U.S.-CUBAN DIALOGUE

REFS: 1. PANAMA 703, 2. PANAMA 706

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. DURING CODEL BAKER'S VISIT (REFTELS), BOTH PANAMANIAN DEFENSE FORCES COMMANDER NORIEGA AND PRESIDENT DE LA ESPRIELLA ADVOCATED U.S.-CUBAN TALKS. NORIEGA TOLD SENATORS BAKER AND MATHIAS THAT CASTRO, IN THE AFTERMATH OF GRENADA AND IN VIEW OF HIS ISLAND'S ECONOMIC SHAMBLES, IS READY FOR AN ACCOMMODATION, INCLUDING WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN FORCES IN AFRICA AND CENTRAL AMERICA.

3. IN A SUBSEQUENT PRIVATE EXCHANGE WITH THE PRESIDENT, HE TOLD THE VISITORS THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD TIME FOR THE U.S. TO MAKE A RENEWED EFFORT WITH CASTRO.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH NOT NEW TO THE PANAMANIAN, THIS LINE HAS NOT BEEN HEARD HERE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. THE CUBANS UNDOUBTEDLY PUT THEM UP TO IT. BRIGGS

END OF MESSAGE

SECRET

State Dept. review completed

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